NATIONAL CONGRESS
Bulletin

FEBRUARY, 1940

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS
600 South Michigan Boulevard Chicago, Illinois

Vol. 7 — No. 6

Dear Local President:

Our year of parent-teacher work is proceeding swiftly through the planned programs, conferences, institutes, and conventions to its close. Just at this point we may well call to mind some of the unlisted values of our work; we should appraise its final worth for us in terms of adult education. Has it kept us alert and questioning, encouraged our intellectual initiative? Has it turned our dreams into something worth while and permanent? Have we adventured with others along new lines of planning and working together, of selecting leaders and dividing responsibility? Have we found pleasure and pride in our work and accepted generously our share of responsiblity for the happiness and well-being of others?

If so, then our parent-teacher work has become for us and for our membership a true education for adult living.

Loyally yours,

Frances S. Pettengill

President,
National Congress of Parents and Teachers

1940 NATIONAL CONVENTION PLANS

PLANS for the 1940 National Convention of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, to be held in Omaha, Nebraska, May 6-9, were presented at the recent meeting of the Executive Committee.

The convention theme, *And the Pursuit of Happiness,* will be developed in addresses, conferences, and forums during the four-day convention in which laymen and educators from all parts of the Nation will participate.

Convention headquarters will be at the Fontenelle Hotel. General sessions will be held at the Paramount Theater, conferences in the larger hotels, and the Sunday Vesper Service at the beautiful Joslyn Memorial.

Presentation of the convention theme by the national president, Mrs. J. K. Pettengill, will be the high light of the opening session on Monday, May 6, at 9:30 a.m. The remainder of the opening day will be given over to a business session, in order that the business of the convention may be transacted before the program is presented.

The keynote of the convention will be sounded by one of the Nation's foremost educators at the Monday evening session, the first of a series of programs given to consideration of the educational, social, and cultural forces which influence the development of children and youth.

The daily schedules for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday will follow the same general pattern: Each morning from 8:30 to 10 o'clock, National Chairmen's Conferences, open to all the delegates, will be conducted. At 10:30 o'clock, there will be a general session. In the afternoon from 2 to 4 o'clock, there will be a general conference session when specialists in various fields will discuss topics related to the convention theme, followed by audience discussion. At 8 o'clock each evening, the general session will offer special features.

PROPOSED RESTATEMENT OF CONGRESS OBJECTS

• At the post-convention meeting in Cincinnati, the National Board of Managers appointed a committee "to analyze the National Bylaws thoroughly from every standpoint," and later asked this committee to submit revisions in line with their findings for the consideration of convention delegates at Omaha.

Among the proposed revisions is a restatement of the Objects. Believing that this statement would be of particular interest to Congress members, the Executive Committee voted that it be brought to the attention of the membership in this issue of the National Congress Bulletin.

The proposed Object is as follows:

The object of the national organization is to be — To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church, and community. To this end it shall endeavor:

— to inspire the family to constant effort toward higher standards of home life

— to secure and support adequate educational opportunity for every child

— to build a community that serves the needs of childhood and youth

— to bring into closer relationship the home, school, and community that all may cooperate intelligently in the total development of the child and develop such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education

— to stimulate public opinion and action in relation to schools and all other agencies which affect the well-being of children and youth

— to accept responsibility as citizens of a democracy

— to emphasize constantly the basic importance of recognizing and being guided by the spiritual values of life.

SIGNPOSTS AND GUIDES

Accepting Civic Responsibility

"It is well for each community to analyze its own needs and select those specific things to do which will in that community most effectively develop the democratic way of life."

— FROM THE 1939 CONVENTION FINDINGS

A FULL realization of what democracy means in the way of privileges and responsibilities is essential to parents and teachers in their cooperative endeavors for the welfare of children and youth.

The parent-teacher association has for one of its objectives "to control and build the environment for children and youth through the development of public opinion and civic activity." Thus activities relating to *civic responsibility* become of particular concern to the parent-teacher membership. Each phase of the Congress program as developed through the subject committees includes activities relating to *civic responsibility.*

ART — Cooperate with civic agencies in the improvement of streets, parks, public buildings; the eradication of billboards and development of roadside beauty.

CHARACTER EDUCATION — Cooperate in developing character education activities in the community by promoting some project, such as a community parents' conference on character education; a highschool students' conference, citywide or countywide, to grapple with specific community character problems.

CHILD HYGIENE—Study conditions existing in the community, to insure: sanitation; safe milk and water supply; food inspection; control of contagious diseases.

HOMEMAKING — Encourage homemakers to participate in local forums and community studies that are significant for the social welfare of the family, the community, and the Nation.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS — Seek to cultivate in the community the common aims, associations, interests, and agencies in which all people in the community can share.

LEGISLATION — Stimulate public opinion and action concerning all measures, local, state, and national, which affect the well-being of children and youth.

LIBRARY SERVICE — Promote a community library service which will follow up radio broadcasts; supply material for discussion groups; and enable the members of the community to pursue their hobbies.

MENTAL HYGIENE — Cooperate with other organizations and agencies in establishing and maintaining child guidance clinics, child adjustment service, and adequate juvenile courts.

MOTION PICTURES AND VISUAL EDUCATION — Cooperate with educational and other agencies in sponsoring community institutes on motion pictures and visual education.

MUSIC — Promote the development of the group spirit through community-wide music projects and celebrations, such as music festivals, concerts, and musical entertainment for children.

PARENT EDUCATION — Plan community lectures and study and discussion groups on aspects of parent education and child development, such as consumer education, juvenile protection, good housing in relation to child development.

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RECREATION — Establish a year-round recreation program of which the family, the school, and the neighborhood are all a part.

SAFETY — Plan an inclusive communitywide program which will cover the problems of home, highway, and pedestrian safety, giving consideration to seasonal hazards to be met during Fourth of July, Christmas, and summer vacations.

SCHOOL EDUCATION — Plan for public meetings or forums where people may have an opportunity to learn about schools and discuss their needs. Work for more adequate knowledge, appreciation, and support of public education on the part of all citizens as basic in the development of democratic government.

SOCIAL HYGIENE — Secure communitywide consideration of the problems of adolescent youth and set up for youth a series of talks and discussions on preparation for marriage and family life.

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Parents and teachers through participation in parent-teacher association activities relating to *civic responsibility* are contributing powerfully and directly to the development in youth of desirable civic attitudes, a broad understanding of social conditions, and constructive social action—in short, to the objective of *civic responsibility* upon which the future of American democracy depends.

Democracy requires sacrifices, and it is obvious today that unless adults are willing to face the problems of democracy in the spirit of sacrifice and to examine the directions in which they should be going and the sacrifices that they may be willing to make, it is useless to talk about a growth in *civic responsibility* in a democratic society for children and young people. Individuals and groups can work steadily toward building up a society in which it shall be the common belief that government is a form of human association in which everybody participates in the creation of values. That is what democracy means. How can this be brought to pass so that there shall be a larger measure of happiness to all people? What can parent-teacher associations do about it?

administration (1937-1940) is basing its convention themes on some aspect of the concept of democracy, hoping, in this way, to make its more than two million members conscious of their responsibilities as today's citizens of a democracy and the guardians and educators of the citizens of tomorrow. Through the publications of the National Congress, the inspiration of convention addresses and conferences is reaching local units and motivating the programs of parent-teacher associations in all parts of the country.

• Three publications are particularly valuable as the basis for program planning in this field:

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Briefly stated, these principles are as follows: The democratic processes must be fostered, understood, and actively promoted. All children in a democracy should be given opportunity and freedom for development and growth. Parents and teachers are the persons most concerned with this guidance and with providing a suitable environment for wholesome growth in the home, the school, and the community.

In the discussion of these principles, four areas of growth are indicated: SELF-REALIZATION, HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS, ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY, CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY.

• Several meetings of a local unit may be devoted to a consideration of each of these four topics, making a complete and well-balanced program for the year; or a unit may make a more intensive study of one of these topics, using it as the basis of the program of meetings for the entire year. Associations interested in the young child will find the topics of self-realization and human relationships of particular interest, while highschool associations will be attracted to the topics of economic efficiency and civic responsibility.

In planning programs on any of these topics, the association may consider any or all of the following aspects of the subject:

1. What attitudes and understanding should be developed in children to make possible wholesome growth in this field?

2. What conditions or environment in home, school, and community are most favorable for satisfactory child growth in this field?

3. What are the schools doing to promote this growth?

4. What can parents do to foster this growth?

5. What are the responsibilities of the community in the matter?

6. What of ourselves? Have we developed to a satisfactory degree the qualities and attitudes we desire for the children?

A study and analysis of the scope of these four areas of growth will facilitate the building of programs best suited to local needs and interests.

SELF-REALIZATION: the growth of the person — his physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual development. The publications listed will give ample material for long-time program planning on the theme of self-realization. These programs should be developed cooperatively by the various chairmen whose sphere of work falls within these topics — i.e. the chairmen of physical, mental and social hygiene, exceptional child, character education, school education, music, art, library service, motion pictures, radio, and recreation. P.T.A. activities to improve conditions inimical to favorable child growth in self-realization will follow as a result of these programs.

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ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY: the growth of the person as an economic unit of society — a producer and a consumer of the material resources of a a democracy. The members of a highschool P.T.A. will find this topic one of particular interest. In cooperation with other civic agencies a survey might be made of the occupational opportunities of the community, the training that is necessary for these jobs, the facilities for placement, and the chances for continued education and growth on the job. The young people themselves would be interested in participating in such a survey. By planning programs using the discussion methods, opportunities will be afforded for an exchange of points of view, the ideal democratic method for educating the participants and for arriving at some definite conclusion that will result in improved service to youth.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY: the development of the person as a responsible participant in a democracy — his growth as a citizen. Modern school procedures are encouraging students to study the democratic form of government by a firsthand examination of the conditions existing in their local communities. By means of student government they are securing actual experience in the workings of a democracy. Parent-teacher associations can encourage and cooperate in these practical applications of democratic theories. A study of the most effective ways of training young people for effective citizenship will be of great interest to parent-teacher groups.

• There should be no break in a year's program. Emphasize the fact throughout the entire year that the parent organization can flourish only in a democracy with the privileges of freedom of assembly, speech, and press; that the organization is a true democracy in its membership, government, and policies; that its creed is based on the democratic ideal — the wholesome growth and development of all children and the highest development of the individual through education and guidance, that the general well-being of society may be conserved and promoted.

— *Mrs. J. W. Bingham*

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Democracy requires sacrifices, and it is obvious today that unless adults are willing to face the problems of democracy in the spirit of sacrifice and to examine the directions in which they should be going and the sacrifices that they may be willing to make, it is useless to talk about a growth in *civic responsibility* in a democratic society for children and young people. Individuals and groups can work steadily toward building up a society in which it shall be the common belief that government is a form of human association in which everybody participates in the creation of values. That is what democracy means. How can this be brought to pass so that there shall be a larger measure of happiness to all people? What can parent-teacher associations do about it?

THROUGH THE YEAR WITH THE P.T.A.

Leadership Points the Way

GROUP organization of any type involves leadership. Wherever we find people, we find leaders. The history of the world is primarily an account of leaders and leadership.

Leadership is not driving people to a goal; real leadership is the drawing out of the best ideas and efforts of each individual in a group, and through the power of reasoning, the leading of the group to a common conclusion as to what is best to do. Leadership worthy of the name demands that motives be unselfish and that the welfare of large numbers of people be advanced. This is effective leadership in a democracy.

QUALITIES OF A LEADER

The qualities of a good leader include the ability to foresee consequences, to assume responsibility for action, to plan, and to organize. The leader's function is largely one of indicating how the needs of the group can be realized most easily. Anyone with a dynamic personality can organize a group to respond temporarily; the real leader possesses more enduring qualities.

A leader should not make decisions for the group. The majority should make the decisions.

A leader must be able to get along with people. This is one of the finest and most necessary qualities a leader can possess.

A leader is open-minded, willing to take constructive criticism from his co-workers, and is tolerant of the opinions of others, recognizing them as a means of broadening his own judgment and mental horizon.

A leader has the courage to acknowledge his mistakes and is willing to correct them.

The good leader has the *willingness* and *ability to serve.*

THE LOCAL PRESIDENT AS LEADER

The president of the local unit should be capable of planning and coordinating the group work. He should be able to see the whole organization as a unit, and to sense the relations of the integral parts of the organization and keep them balanced.

A president should preside according to parliamentary procedure, in order to insure equal rights and privileges to all the members. Only through orderly procedure can the desires of the members be expressed and the will of the assembly be enforced.

A good presiding officer sees that members are given equal rights on the floor, fits the procedure to the will of the assembly, and sees that the will of the assembly is put into action.

If the president is broad-minded, self-controlled and tolerant, keeping the high purpose and ideals of the organization in the foreground, and self in the background, the organization will be a group of co-workers inspired by their leader whose example and precept they voluntarily follow.

ELECTING LEADERS

Every organization should provide in its own bylaws for the method of nominating and electing its officers, who are to be its leaders.

In making nominations, a nominating committee usually renders the best service. However, nominations from the floor, giving everybody a chance to name candidates, are in order immediately after the report of the nominating committee is read to the assembly.

Voting by ballot, which means the casting of a secret vote by each individual member, is universally acknowledged to be the most democratic and the freest method of election.

PARENT-TEACHER LEADERSHIP

To be able to inspire others with hope, faith and confidence in the future is the kind of leadership with the spark of divinity in it which leads the way in human progress. This is the kind of leadership for which parent-teacher members should be searching.

To work with all types and groups of people, parent-teacher leadership must understand and appreciate the traditions and problems of the homes from which members come, must sense the attitudes, the hopes, and the fears of parents for their children. Wise parent-teacher leadership seeks to understand, to anticipate the will of the people, and to direct it to the support of education.

Parent-teacher leadership believes that the interpretation of the school to the supporting public should be universal, comprehensive, and intelligent. Parent-teacher leadership constantly stresses the value of the school to society in general, as well as the value which the individual receives.

Parent-teacher leadership works in behalf of the well-being of the entire community; it can support every worthy community movement; it is unique in its capacity to mold public opinion; and it can represent the social conscience of the community in matters affecting the wholesome development of the child.

ANNOUNCEMENT

When the National Congress discontinued correspondence and directed study courses last summer, plans were made to offer in their place a reading course based on the *Manual* and *Guidebook.* The Executive Committee, at its February meeting, decided that the presentation of this type of course is impractical at the present time and therefore voted to drop the plan for a national reading course.

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Editorial Committee: Mrs. Charles D. Center, Mrs. M. D. Wilkinson, Mrs. Fred M. Raymond

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BUILDING *The Local* PROGRAM

The following material is presented by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers for the purpose of assisting local associations in the development of effective parent-teacher programs. The material was prepared by the national chairman of Program Service in the hope that our local presidents will share it with their program chairmen.

DEFINITION OF THE TERM "PROGRAM"

The term "program" as used in this outline indicates not merely the plan for meetings or the scheduled presentations at meetings but the entire plan of interest and activity of the association. This will include:

1. The surveys, investigations, conferences, and reports of committees or designated individuals concerning the local problems or interests falling within the scope of P.T.A. consideration.

2. The selection of the specific local interests to be the object of study or activity for a certain period.

3. The presentation and discussion of these local problems or interests at the meetings of the association.

4. The activities designed to meet the established needs growing out of the above.

5. The evaluation at the end of the period of the results in relation to the objectives, followed by plans for the termination of the activity or its continuance under proper auspices.

PROGRAM PLANNING A COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISE

Inasmuch as program planning covers the entire scope of work, the service must, of necessity, be a cooperative one. Committee chairmen should consider the following points of approach in presenting their subject:

1. How to discover the specific local needs and interests in the field. (What to look for; whom to consult; where to find criteria or accepted standards; helpful suggestions as to the type of survey that may be undertaken under the auspices of local units, guarding against any encroachment into technical or professional areas.)

2. How to select appropriate topics for consideration at meetings, indicating which must be handled by the expert and which may be considered advantageously by the lay person.

3. How to initiate desirable activities in the field. (What the objectives and procedures should be; by whom supervised; which may be carried to a successful conclusion entirely by P.T.A. effort; which may be conducted more effectively by cooperation with other agencies.)

THE TECHNIQUES OF PROGRAM PLANNING

The techniques of program planning which should be given thoughtful consideration include:

1. The proper use of publications and other program aids now available.

2. The adaptation of state or other "ready-made" programs to local needs.

3. Local surveys to discover needs and interests.

4. Suitable objectives of P.T.A. activity.

5. The effective functioning of the program committee. (Joint participation in selection of the objectives through a committee on which are fathers, mothers, and teachers.)

6. The development of the program theme through meetings and activities planned in advance for a certain period.

7. Criteria for determining suitable topics for consideration at P.T.A. meetings.

8. The proper planning of the meeting involves: (a) Distribution of the time available. (b) Regulation of entertainment features. (c) Methods of presenting the main topic. (Emphasizing the use of the democratic methods of discussion and the use of demonstrations.) (d) The functions of the various committees, cooperating to make the meeting effective. (Publicity, Program, Hospitality, Membership, and the various subject committees.) (e) The hour of the meeting arranged so that all members—fathers, mothers, and teachers—will have some opportunity to participate.

9. Activities integrated with the main interests and objectives of the program.

10. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the program in terms of its objectives.

11. Report on program planning. (To cover the integrated program, not merely the meetings.)

SPECIAL TOPICS FOR INVESTIGATION AND STUDY BY THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

1. The types of program that have the widest general appeal.

2. The types of program that hold and build up membership.

3. The types of program that call for general membership participation.

4. The types of program that result in constructive activities.

5. The types of program that are considered of greatest educational value by (a) teachers; (b) parents; (c) the community at large.

6. The types of program most enjoyed by (a) mothers; (b) fathers; (c) teachers.

It is through the programs of local units that the splendid objectives of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers are realized, and our opportunities for service in promoting these objectives are practically unlimited.

A SUGGESTED PROGRAM . . .

Freedom for Growth

If we are to retain our priceless heritage of democracy and pass it on to our children, the democratic ideal must be treasured, guarded, and strengthened. The Nation must understand the meaning of democracy and all its implications and actively practice and promote the democratic principles.

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administration (1937-1940) is basing its convention themes on some aspect of the concept of democracy, hoping, in this way, to make its more than two million members conscious of their responsibilities as today's citizens of a democracy and the guardians and educators of the citizens of tomorrow. Through the publications of the National Congress, the inspiration of convention addresses and conferences is reaching local units and motivating the programs of parent-teacher associations in all parts of the country.

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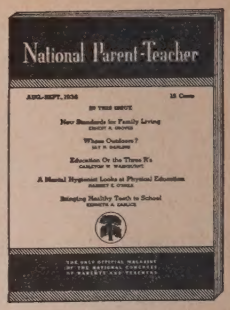

News About Our Magazine

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE—
$1 A YEAR

A STATE PRESIDENT EVALUATES THE MAGAZINE

AN unusually free period in the office has given me an opportunity to do something I have never done before—read through two numbers of our parent-teacher Magazine at one sitting. All the work and fun of a large family took my time during December, and most of my reading for the month went by the board, the *National Parent-Teacher* along with the rest. The time spent in consecutive reading of the last two numbers of the Magazine has given me an appreciation of its quality that I had never had before, even though I had been aware of its excellence. I want to be sure that every parent-teacher member realizes the worth of the *National Parent-Teacher* magazine and makes use of the opportunity to read and study it.

• Have you ever taken time to look at the pen sketches in the Magazine? You feel the tingle of the cold and snow and hear the soft stillness of winter in the pine woods as you look at the picture of the family driving in their sleigh through a northern forest. This picture, and Robert Tristram Coffin's "Recipe for Christmas," have called forth such a nostalgic longing for a New England Christmas that I've already announced to my family that we must spend next Christmas "where it is winter."

• When tired of the here and the now I can take a vicarious jaunt into wide-open, lovely spaces with the artist who illustrates our Magazine. He has caught for me some of the beauty of forest, lake, sea, and small country village in the pictures to be found on almost every page.

• The confusions and animosities of the world seem so great that an attempt on our part to help in peacemaking for the future may seem futile, yet, in the January issue Mildred McAfee gives us simple, homely suggestions for promoting understanding and tolerance in the lives of those affected by our thinking — especially the children whose attitudes are conditioned so largely by our own. "It is reassuring to realize that even the most inconspicuous parent or teacher can play a part" in bringing a better day "when personality will be recognized as a supreme value."

• There is no chance for us to grow smug over the fortunate opportunity which makes us citizens of America today if we read thoughtfully Stuart Chase's "A Continent at Stake" and accept his challenge to Americans to meet nature's minimum demands and restore the balance of forests and grasslands, and so stop the terrible erosion which causes the fertility of a continent to wash into the sea. Frances Perkins' editorial — "Christmas, 1939," telling of children who "do not have sufficient food, shelter, or clothing"; who "do not get even a minimum of medical care," and who "face frustration, insecurity, despair, and confusion," is a challenge to democracy which we must accept.

• I haven't mentioned the many articles about training the small child and the adolescent boy and girl. They have been stressed many times in our publicity. We have tried to show you how helpful they can be to you as a parent or teacher, and in program building for your association. I have been impressed, also, with the richness of material designed to stretch our horizons — to make us more aware of the world in which we live, its problems, its challenge to us, and its beauty.

MRS. R. B. SHOWALTER
Alabama School Journal

HIGH LIGHTS FROM THE MARCH ISSUE

"The sacrifice made through history in countless armed conflicts will have been wasted indeed if it does not serve as a constant reminder to all of us, everywhere, of the tragic cost of war for vanquished and victor alike; and of the desperate need, if civilization and progress are to continue, to find other and more constructive means of adjusting differences and grievances among nations."

— From *Editorial* by the Honorable Cordell Hull, Secretary of State.

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"Growing up does not mean a sudden and automatic change. The child isn't a mamma's or daddy's boy one day and a man the next. Growing up means a gradual increase in responsibility."

— From *What It Means to Grow Up* by Ralph H. Ojemann, Iowa Child Welfare Research Station.

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"And, whatever form it may take, economic assistance to the family must stimulate resourcefulness, keep alive energy and ambition, and promote the restoration of all individuals in the family to a normal role in society."

— From *Economic Security for Family Living* by John E. Anderson, director, Institute of Child Welfare, University of Minnesota.

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"Much of the training in schools and colleges misses fire because homes give no opportunity for applying it and schools can set up only artificial situations."

— From *The House That Jack Built* by Jennie I. Rowntree, author of the handbook *Child Guidance for Parents and Teachers.*

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"Economic efficiency on the part of each citizen is desirable not only for the citizen's own sake but also for the sake of the democratic society we are trying to build. Such sufficiency is the only path to reasonable economic security for most of us."

— From *More Than a Job* by Howard E. Wilson, associate professor of education at Harvard University.